

## THE HOMES OF THE LEPCHAS

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wall on their right side (as must be done for all lamaist holy places or objects) turning the prayer wheels as they come up to them. 346  
778

The chief holy place is a large bare room, occupying almost the whole of the ground floor of the building. The interior of the room is empty except for four supporting pillars in the middle of the floor, and two slightly raised seats running in parallel lines from the altar to the door on which the lamas sit during ceremonies. In the centre of the back wall is the altar, inset in a carved wooden frame; on it are three large images, Sangyi Youbami in the centre, flanked by Gamyang Kanché Rimbuché and Chérézi; in front of these larger images are four smaller gods. On either side of the altar are worked wooden pigeon-holes, in which are kept the hundred and eight volumes of the Kangyour, one of the two Tibetan scriptures. These volumes consist of loose leaves bound up in a cloth and fastened between two plain pieces of wood as bindings. Scattered about the room are the various musical instruments which are not in use—drums, gongs and cymbals; the metal instruments similar to trumpets and clarionets, the conch shells and the flutes made out of a human femur are kept either on or before the altar. Every morning at dawn a *kané* (sacristan) places on the altar before the images seven bowls of water for the gods to drink and wash in; every evening at sunset these bowls are emptied and replaced by *chimi*—altar lights, consisting of a small metal container with a wick of bamboo or cloth, filled with melted butter or oil. There also stands on the altar a copper jug containing blessed water (*tyū*) and usually a pair of vases filled with flowers. There are also occasional offerings of cones of ground grain. During important festivals the front of the altar is completely hidden by elaborate constructions, chiefly made out of dough and butter which represent those gods who are being specially worshipped. Anybody approaching this or any other lamaist altar for the first time is meant to prostrate himself three times, standing with joined hands, falling to the knees and then touching the ground with the forehead. After these prostrations no special attention is paid to the altar, and it is quite permissible to turn one's back on it. [779]  
[534] ●

To the west of the main room, with a separate entrance also on the north wall, is the *lha-gong*. This is a high and narrow chamber almost entirely filled with four huge prayer wheels, reaching up to the ceiling; indeed the first and biggest of the wheels, which is called Betsa Guru, pierces the ceiling and its top, a cone

## RELIGION I: LAMAISM

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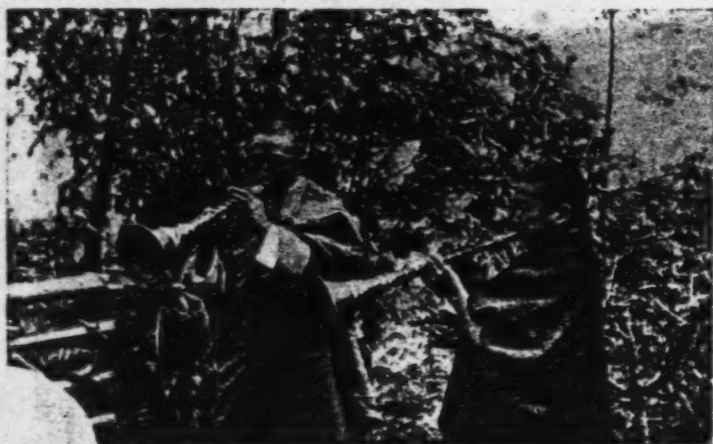
grade to another demands firstly increasing knowledge and secondly validating feasts—*chaptok klon*. There must be an interval of at least three years between each rise in grade. It is expected that the expenses of the first two validating feasts will be borne by the young lama's family, the subsequent ones by himself. In the validating feasts for the higher grades everybody in the neighbourhood has to make fixed contributions. All the feasts are accompanied by prayers and readings from the scriptures.

The grade above *chapti-bu* is *tongpeun-bu*. These are the players of the musical instruments—the conch shells, the *galing* (a metal trumpet between a clarinet and a trumpet), the long telescopic trumpet (*pak-doong*) and the flute made from a human femur (*kong-ling*). People learn how to play these instruments by watching experts; for the *galing* which has a reed mouthpiece and is capable of a variety of notes, the learner holds a grass between his teeth and copies the fingering of the player; he may also be privately taught by friends. To my Occidental ears all the music sounded like the cacophony of a zoo in a thunderstorm, but the lamas recognise and teach tunes, or, as they say, 'numbers.' The validating feast which demands a pig, two maunds of grain and four pounds of oil, only lasts one day. *Tongpeun-bu* cannot perform any offices on their own, and practically occupy the position of choristers.

Next in grade comes the *kané* whose one day feast calls for an ox, three maunds of grain and a maund of *chi*. The chief business of the *kané* is looking after the monastery and assisting the Dorjé Lapoon in their ceremonies; he also plays musical instruments. The *kané* are the only people who have to visit the monastery daily, to place the bowls of water on the altars at dawn, the *chimi* at sunset, and to burn incense. In the absence of superiors the *kané* is permitted to perform all offices of which he is capable; usually however his knowledge is slight and he has to ask his superiors for help; this help must be paid for with *chi*. The *kané* roughly corresponds to a deacon.

*Kané* and the ranks below barely qualify as lamas; they are in a way still students. Between the *kané* and the next grade *chéné* there is a very great gap. A *chéné* can perform all offices and in the absence of superiors can overlook monastery ceremonies; if he is old and experienced enough he can take pupils. The *chéné* is really a qualified priest. His validating feast is the most expensive of all: he has to give an ox, a pig, six maunds of grain, and ten maunds of *chi*. Each household has to contribute twenty pounds of *chi* and

PLATE 13



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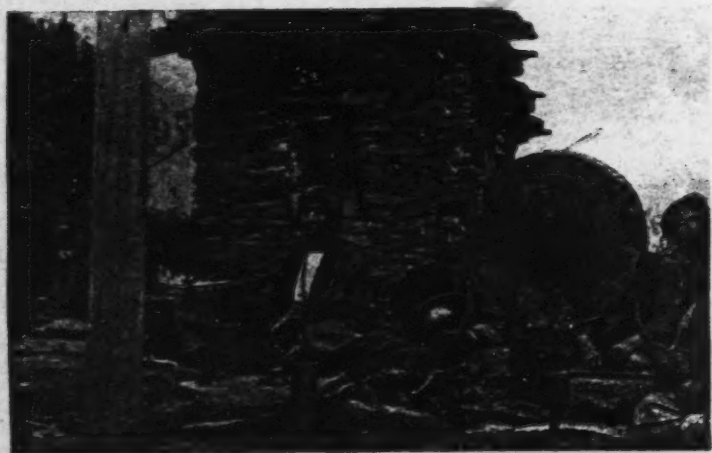
LAMAS PLAY MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS IN THE  
MONASTERY COURTYARD

*Above :* The son of Lharibu Chujen and Tafoor play 'clarionets'.

*Below :* Kutt's, Lumba's son, and Chudo play telescopic trumpets.

[facing p. 208]

PLATE 17



[534] ●

## THE CHERIM CEREMONY III

*Above:* Mamoo moong in detail; she is made of buckwheat flour decorated with butter. Note small kite-shaped *deu*, inscribed labels, *nahleut* at the base.

*Below:* The lamas invoke Mamoo moong. Right on the left is a *chaxé* table with bowls of water and rice for the gods' refreshment; seated on the left is the second Dorjé Lapoon fingering his rosary; on a cloth in front of him his sacred bell and brass *dorjé* or thunderbolt. Tafoor, who made the nine-storey palace is playing the cymbals. On the right, half out of the picture is lame Satéo, ready to strike the gong. Note the *patyoor* of *chi*.

[facing p. 228]

## BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD

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or fruits, or kick them about, or perhaps improvise syphons out of bamboo. Very often at feasts and large gatherings half a dozen children will play simultaneously at the same thing, but each playing by himself. At the numerous feasts and ceremonies I was present at over three months I only once saw children playing together, and this was a tug-of-war which lasted two or three minutes. 857

One of the chief pursuits of the older boys is the imitating of bird calls and the catching of small birds, usually in bamboo and thread snares. Nearly every boy over the age of nine could imitate bird calls accurately through whistling, and some of them were extraordinarily good at it; Chimpet in particular was so exact that unless I looked I could never tell whether it was a boy or a bird calling. Besides this direct imitation of bird calls, which is often used to lure birds to snares, the Lepchas have nonsense-syllable equivalents (similar to our *tu-wii to-who*), most of them extremely unlike the calls they represented, though the Lepchas maintained they were accurate. If the boys catch edible birds in their snares they take them home as presents to their mothers. A few of the older boys also learn to make and play bamboo flutes, receiving instruction from some older brother or friend. 825 857 [868] [534]

When children do play together it is always an imitation of adult life (the one rare exception is the imitation of fighting animals). The courtyard outside the house is the favourite scene for these plays; using small sticks or bamboos which they cut with their little knives they play at building houses or making bridges or at fencing fields; at other times they may intimate a marriage or the performance of some religious ceremony. These plays are relatively rare, for they demand the simultaneous liberty of four or five children, which does not occur very often. They hold very little place in the childhood memories of adults. The chief things adults seem to remember from their childhood are physical mishaps, usually from falling, and being punished; nearly all adults remember being carried by their elders before they could walk properly. 857 [153]

Children between the ages of five and ten have a special almost private vocabulary which they use in talking to one another and which is much employed in their plays. Part of this vocabulary is baby words—deformations of ordinary Lepcha speech and onomatopoeic words; the rest is made up of rather violent terms of abuse—*pahoo to*, may you be a feast for devils!, *kan-tii*, heap of 192 195

INTRODUCTORY AND HISTORICAL 15

however, we took a complete outfit, including even china//4 plates and cups, a regular battery of pots and pans, and vast quantities of a special brand of American coffee (which I must admit was excellent), and special machines for its preparation. Most of the apparatus was never used.

On arrival at Gangtok our staff was increased by Palden, 114 one of His Highness's Lepcha orderlies, who was to act as 124 liaison between us and the locals. He spent most of his time in scouring the countryside in search of chickens and eggs. This job was not quite such a sinecure as perhaps it sounds; for towards the end of our stay we had consumed practically all the local poultry and had to get even eggs from as far as three and four days' journey away. By virtue of his official connection with the Palace, Palden's status (albeit humble; his normal duties consisting in the delivery of letters in Gangtok) was swollen to enormous stature in the eyes of the trusting Lepchas. From our point of view, however, this was all to the good, for it enabled him to demand permission for us to see all sorts of domestic ceremonies which would otherwise have been entirely hidden from our eyes.

There was also Geoffrey's English-speaking interpreter, Sukra Sing; and to work with me, one Dhawa, who spoke 191 Lepcha and Nepali, but who knew no English. Both of these 797 were Christians, the latter being a recent convert. They were both very disapproving, as indeed was Palden, of the local Lepchas, to whom they considered themselves vastly superior. On wet days, or on the frequent occasions when we had no informants, Dhawa would spend the whole day, from 534 earliest dawn until well after dark, playing a bamboo flute which he had himself constructed. Unless interrupted he would play right through the Church of Scotland Hymnal, sometimes repeating his favourite tunes five and six times in succession. I believe he did this as an atonement for the extremely Rabelaisian conversations he was at times asked to translate. Whenever the conversation had in his opinion gone far enough in this direction he would get up without a word and slink quietly away; and shortly after we would hear the

793 teacher and when this happens his father will beat him and send him back. A boy must study for three years before he can call himself a Yukman: but he is really no more than a probationer for several years to come. There is no examination at the end of the novitiate, but the pupil must be pronounced as fit by his master before proceeding further. Before a Yukman can be advanced in rank he must be passed as fit by the head of his monastery. This, however, is a mere matter of form and dependent entirely upon giving the necessary feasts. The position is almost exactly the same as that of the Oxford or Cambridge B.A., who has merely to pay a fee in order to become a Master of Arts: but in Lingtem the candidate is not required to pay in cash; he merely entertains the Senate to a feast of pork and drink.

As soon as a boy has finished his three years' course of study he is presented to the local monastery by two Lamas, for [43] whom he provides food and drink. In return they give him a ceremonial scarf and a present of one rupee. There is no actual ceremony, but this exchange of gifts constitutes the novice's graduation as a *Chap-dibu*, the lowest rank of Lama. He has no priestly functions and is little more than a servant to the other Lamas during such times as they are present at the monastery, seeing that their drinking cups are kept replenished, sweeping out the building and performing other such menial tasks. A *Chap-dibu* must remain about three years in this and each subsequent rank before he can be advanced, the next stage being known as *Tong-pön-bu*. To attain this rank the Lama must provide a feast of one pig, [273] eighty pounds of specially prepared dry millet for making *Chi*, the universal drink of Sikkim, and eighty pounds each of rice and parched rice. A *Tong-pön-bu* is not permitted to read from books during monastic ceremonies, but he may now [534] play on conch shells. He may also blow the funnel-shaped hautboy called *Galing*, also the long ten-foot trumpets, *Rukdung*, and the flutes, made from human thigh-bones known as *Kongling*. When playing on the conch shell he may, if he wishes, wear a special red cap called *Tongyo*. Should the

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Lamaist music.

Lamaist music.



Lamaist music.

[Facing p. 76]

842 born to be a girl, as in this case she can look after subsequent children and relieve her mother. Apart from this, there seems a slight preference for boys; for, in addition to the help they are able to give in the fields, it means that there is someone to look after the parents when they are too old to work for themselves, whereas girls leave home on marriage, except in very rare circumstances.

855 Once a child is big enough to look after itself—that is when  
 [854] it reaches the age of four or five—it is left more or less to its  
 [857] own devices; and unless a boy is to become a Lama he  
 [871] receives no formal training such as is given to the ordinary European child. Nor is a girl taught how to cook, but by watching her mother and doing odd jobs about the house she gradually acquires the necessary skill. Little girls are fond of playing at making toy houses and it is a common sight to see them pretending to cook with leaves and mud,  
 [524] but I never saw a girl playing with a doll and was told that they are unknown.

Small boys seem to spend most of their time wandering about with a pellet-bow; and stilt-walking is a popular  
 • [534] amusement. Most boys also play the flute, which is merely a length of thin bamboo with five holes for stops.

593 Most people are of the opinion that the ideal family consists of from three to four girls and from four to five boys. If there are too many boys there will not, unless the family is very rich, be enough to feed them all when they grow up and marry. As a matter of fact, the average family in Lingtem is extremely small, and a number of couples are childless. Since the average number of children does not give an indication of the true state of affairs, I have given the composition of each of the families in Talung in Appendix 1,  
 593 to which the reader is referred.<sup>1</sup> It will be noted that a very

842 high proportion of the women appear to be sterile, a matter which causes great concern to the people themselves, who realise that their numbers are steadily dwindling, and who desire children above all things. This question of sterility is perhaps the greatest problem with which the Lepchas

<sup>1</sup> [See cat. 116, p. 301—Analysis]

587 in Lingtem, is being married to-day. His first wife died a year ago, and he is now marrying a childless widow of twenty-four. It seems that in the eyes of the village he has  
 [77] struck lucky; for in normal circumstances it is not considered auspicious for a girl to marry a widower. In this particular case, however, the girl's deceased husband had no brothers; nor was anyone else entitled to inherit her, so the present arrangement suits both parties. The only fly in to-day's  
 [78] ointment is that the birth-signs of the bride and bridegroom are antagonistic; so much so, in fact, that many people think the marriage foredoomed to failure. Ongden, however, is quite well-off, and in any case, being himself a Lama, can probably obtain special terms from the faculty for the services which will restore the balance of ill-luck. But in view of the special circumstances both he and his bride think the risk worth taking.

587 We were summoned to the house at nine-thirty, but nothing  
 273 much was happening when we arrived. We went first to the kitchen, where some thirty or forty people were sitting quietly soaking, after which we were shown into the altar-room, where the actual ceremony will take place. Six Lamas were sitting against the wall: they too were drinking. The second  
 [534] Dorje-Lopön appeared to be in charge, and the others all had instruments, the usual six-foot trumpets, clarionets and drums.

778 On the altar were a number of *tormas* of rice, decorated  
 587 with dabs of coloured butter. Into these were stuck several rather crudely coloured pictures of gods, the centre one of which was said to represent Guru Rimpoche. Behind these one of the usual Tibetan pictures had been hung; but it was so old and tattered as to make its details unrecognisable. There was also a small brass vessel filled with holy water, into the neck of which a peacock's feather had been stuck; also a beer bottle, said to contain spirits. I also noticed a number of small bowls filled with rice and other grains, and several oranges and a heap of walnuts. In front of all was a row of  
 [373] small lamps, the last of which was only lighted when the bride arrived.

APRIL, 1848.

LEPCHAS, CUSTOMS AND MARRIAGES.

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*Some<sup>1</sup> are supposed to be antidotes against* poison, and hence fetch an enormous price; they are of a peculiar wood, rarer and paler-coloured. I have paid a guinea for one such, hardly different from the common sort, which cost but 4*d.* or 6*d.* MM. Huc and Gabet graphically allude to this circumstance, when wishing to purchase cups at Lhasa, where their price is higher, as they are all imported from the Himalaya. The knots from which they are formed, are produced on the roots of oaks, maples, and other mountain forest trees, by a parasitical plant, known to botanists as *Balanophora*.

Their intoxicating drink, which seems more to excite than to debauch the mind, is partially fermented Murwa grain (*Eleusine Coracana*). Spirits are rather too strong to be relished raw, and when a glass of wine is given to one of a party, he sips it, and hands it round to all the rest. A long bamboo flute, with four or six burnt holes far below the mouth-hole, is the only musical instrument I have seen in use among them. When travelling, and the fatigues of the day are over, the Lepchas will sit for hours chatting, telling stories, singing in a monotonous tone, or blowing this flute. I have often listened with real pleasure to the simple music of this rude instrument; its low and sweet tones are singularly Æolian, as are the airs usually played, which fall by octaves: it seems to harmonize with the solitude of their primæval forests, and he must have a dull ear who cannot draw from it the indication of a contented mind, whether he may relish its soft musical notes or not. Though always equipped for the chase, I fancy the Lepcha is no great sportsman; there is little to be pursued in this region, and he is not driven by necessity to follow what there is.

Their marriages are contracted in childhood, and the wife purchased by money, or by service rendered to the

<sup>1</sup> [i.e., wooden cups. - Analyst]

286 --characteristic Lepcha patterns. The threads used for the weaving  
 [387] of cloth were formerly dyed with vegetable matter, of which likewise  
 291 a few samples were brought along. Among the articles of clothing  
 301 there is a complete woman's costume with the pertinent ornaments:  
 two large needles connected by a silver chain, a pair of earrings set  
 with corals, as well as two necklaces -- one mainly of turquoise and  
 the other consisting of corals and blue glass beads. A hat made of  
 reed and types of nettle and a pair of men's earrings decorated with  
 turquoises were acquired as especially characteristic articles of the  
 garb formerly customary for Lepcha men.

- 534 [270] As far as musical instruments are concerned, the collec-  
 tion comprises three flutes of varying size -- one of which is a double  
 flute -- a jewsharp, a gong with wooden drumsticks, as well as two  
 old war drums whose cylinders consist of copper. They were presented  
 [43] by bs Tan hdzin rnam rgyal, the sixth king of Sikkim (born 1769,  
 ascended the throne in 1780, died in Lhasa in 1793) to the Lepcha  
 chieftain of Sukmi, who bore the Tibetan title of "Dsöngpön"  
 (r dzong dpon, "bailiff"), as an acknowledgment of faithful war service.

756 A few especially valuable articles of the collection are parts of  
 [52] the equipment of a Mun priestess (a pouch with a carrying strap, deco-  
 rated with eagles' claws, bird bills, the teeth of wild animals, and  
 shells; plumes serving as a headdress; and parts of a rosary with a  
 bell) which had been handed down for about three centuries in the  
 family of a well-known Mun priestess who died a few years ago: Norki

[746] Lepchani from the village of Seket. This equipment, of which only  
 one similar specimen is known in Sikkim, was occasionally used by  
 a Mun priestess in the king's palace at Gangtok during the ceremonies  
 that take place annually in the night before the ceremony of the Lama  
 dance in honor of the mountain god Gangs chhen mdzod lnga. In re-  
 756 gard to other objects used in the original pre-Buddhist religion of the  
 771 Lepchas, which were likewise acquired, the following should be named  
 amulets, magic wands, little baskets for keeping substances for magic  
 healing, a little scaling ladder [Steigbaum] used at the burial of the  
 [76] Lepcha priests known as Bong thing, which was supposed to aid the soul  
 of the Bong thing in its ascent to heaven -- one of the many evidences  
 of the shaman ideas that are deeply rooted in the Lepcha religion --,  
 a gong used by the Yaba priests, and paraphernalia for performing cere-  
 monies in honor of the ancestral spirits, local divinities, and for the  
 appeasement of the demons that were unleashed during the wars of  
 the priests during which they used magic.

776 say the Lepchas, the good spirits never do us any harm; it is only the malignant spirits which we have to fear. To propitiate the most malicious of the evil spirits are priests and priestesses or rather wizards, all of whom are absolutely illiterate — unable to read or write. And their ritual is of the most elementary and loosest kind. They live like the ordinary members of the tribe and have no temples, for the Lepchas have no images nor any visible objects of devotion, though lately some of them occasionally worship in Lama-  
[156] temples.  
[177]

756 The priest is called *Bong-ting* or 'Lord-Oracle' literally 'Mouth-Lord'; the mouth-piece of communication between the poor Lepcha and the Great Spirit. But more in demand than the priest is the priestess, the *Mään* or *Mään-nak*, who may be the wife of the *Bong-ting*, though not necessarily so; and both of these offices are usually hereditary. This priestess or priest is resorted to in every case of serious disease, for the Lepcha  
[153] believes that disease is always one to the machinations of an evil spirit and he has no faith at all in medicines. In the priestly rites there is no dancing as in the Shamanistic Bon of Central Asia. In their worship, which is of fear and not love, they invoke the *Mung* or other evil spirit by cutting a bamboo into pieces and sticking the pieces into the ground with bits of stone. Then they propitiate the spirit with sacrifice of a fowl or a pig, and implore it to release its victim. Occasionally they perform sympathetic magic in cases of severe pain by drawing blood with a dry knife or spike of bamboo, without wounding the skin, like the Pawang wizards of the Malay Archipelago<sup>2</sup>. And so highly are these poor aboriginal priests esteemed, even by the immigrant Tibetans in Sikkim, that these latter, although professing the superior Lamaism, frequently condescend to employ these Lepcha priests and priestesses, in the belief that the latter hold especially close relations with the indigenous spirits of the country. It is a question how far this partiality for female priests may be a survival of the matriarchy before referred to, or whether it may be owing to most of the malignant divinities being female and so requiring a female priest.

533 Coming now to the songs themselves, we see that they are idyllic in character. Their words refer mostly to the inscrutable mystery of the origin and destiny of man and the primitive-passion of love. It is curious to notice how they gratefully associate themselves  
[324] with the Bamboo, whose stout stem supplies them with the sheltering frame-work, walls and thatch of their huts, with fuel, bows and arrows; its larger joints afford water-jugs, cooking pots and pans; its smaller joints supply bottles, smoking pipes and flutes; its branches make a springy couch; its bark supplies baskets, umbrellas and ropes, and its tender shoots are eaten as food. The songs are sung usually to the accompaniment of a flute or a sort of Jew's harp. This small harp is also used by the Nagas and other Malayan races. It is made of bamboo and decorated by curving or burned in 'poker'-work with a plaited or basket-pattern. It is called *Tang-dyu* — the name *Tang* being apparently onomatopoeitic for the twanging sound it produces. The flute called *Pu-lit* is also of bamboo as its name denotes and it is decorated like the harp.

The melody of two of the chief of these songs I am able to give here through the

<sup>1</sup> This title is practically identical with the 'Gods' mouth (*Mu-Na*) of the Bon religion. Cf. my Buddhism of Tibet p. 486. The term *Yak* or *Yak-man* is usually applied to the Lamas and Kosalas priests, and may be a corruption of the Indian *Yogi*. An assistant-priest is called *Tyol-be*.

<sup>2</sup> Malay Sketches by F. A. SWETTERMAN, London 1890.

793 incense, and dry twigs from the cypress tree. In front of  
 796 the little table is a winnower on which parts of the animal  
 [712] sacrifices are arranged in the following manner: opposite  
 787 the vessel is the skull turned towards the table. Behind it  
 are the entrails. To the left of the skull is a hind leg, to the  
 front is a foreleg. Between the foreleg and the entrails is  
 a thigh with a little meat. When everything is arranged,  
 the teacher sits behind the table a little to the left, in front of  
 the scarf. His pupil sits on his right. Then he lays the scarf  
 on the pupil's hand and recites the prayers, which the apprentice  
 repeats after him sentence by sentence. Then the master  
 makes a ceremonial speech to the initiated in which he  
 explains: 'Now the price for the freeing of your body is paid  
 to the demon, but under one condition, that you consecrate  
 your life to the Mun-god, and that you offer up your body  
 as his dwelling place.' After this speech he hands the vessel  
 filled with the chi to his pupil so that he can drink from it  
 three times from three different places. This drinking of the  
 chi from the vessel garnished with butter stands for the actual  
 ritual consecration. With this the pupil is bound for three  
 years to study with his master. At the end of the instruction,  
 a second sacrifice of a bullock is performed. With this the  
 pupil is given full powers and can function independently.

792 The most important sacrificial offering for all these  
 796 ceremonies is the bullock. An ox is desirable. If a pig  
 is given the neophyte will be unable to expel Lom-doon-moong  
 [753] (the devil of Jaundice). If a goat, he will be unable to expel  
 776 Mat-moong, (the devil who produces various unpleasant  
 symptoms which are the results of ancestral quarrels)."<sup>68</sup>

793 According to our investigations, the Mun and the Bong-  
 thing are both equally powerful magicians. They only,  
 can expel demons and appease the gods through sacrifice.  
 Both, men as well as women, can be Mun. The Mun spirit  
 is not a female spirit but can choose either men or women as  
 its servants. The Bong-thing can only be a man. The Mun  
 [778] and the Bong-thing whom we were able to observe, do not  
 793 wear any special ceremonial dress or ornaments during their  
 534 activities, neither do they use the double skull-drum (damaru)

## THE MOUNTAIN TRIBES OF SIKKIM

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nor the big flat round Shaman-drum (rnga). For the sacrifice they do not use either the magic dagger (phur-bu) or the thunderbolt (rdo-rje), nor conch trumpets (dung), nor flutes made from human thigh bones (rkang-gling), nor the trident, nor the cup of the human skull (thod-pa). All the above mentioned articles are however indispensable to the Tibetan magicians, the Inner Asiatic and the Siberian Shamans. It is therefore evident, that the Mun and the Bong-thing cannot be identical with the Tibetan Bon-po as some scholars state. They belong rather to that primitive priest class, which has not been influenced by the typical Shamanism which operated in Tibet and spread from there to some Himalayan districts, to Inner and East Asia. The Mun and the Bong-thing are not allowed to practise any black magic as such. This is attributed to them by the neighbouring people, who consequently fear them greatly. During our investigations on this subject we repeatedly heard it said, "Only a wicked and demoralised Mun and Bong-thing would use his powers to harm another person, for their vocation is precisely to help people and to warn off all harm." The Mun wears no prayer cord. When he has to make a prophecy, he calls to his spirit, who comes on to his shoulder and speaks through his mouth. The Bong-thing has a prayer string, which he uses when prophesying. This string however, differs from the Tibetan one and has no definite number of beads.

In the white magic practised by the Lepchas we found many parallels with the ancient Chinese white magic, which had not as yet been influenced by the typical Inner Asiatic Shamanism. There is something in common to both in the matter of casting out demons. The magician compels the demon to enter into a pot of blood. Once the demon is in, he closes the pot and buries it.<sup>57</sup> Their dances have certain characteristics in common with the Wu,—the ancient Chinese magicians. In everything we find the content of the ancient class of magic which was widely spread and which preceded the Inner Asiatic Shamanism. There it received later the typical shaping which today, under the name of Shamanism

57. cf. Dictionary of the Lepcha Language, op. cit. p. 204 a.b.